

Message Text

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SUBJ: RAPIDLY IMPROVING HOUSING SITUATION IN EARTHQUAKE ZONE

1. SUMMARY. DESPITE THE HANDICAPS OF BAD WEATHER AND LACK OF MANUAL LABOR, SPECIAL COMMISSIONER ZAMBERLETTI HAS APPARENTLY DELIVERED ON HIS PLEDGE TO PROVIDE SHELTERS FOR ALL EARTHQUAKE REFUGEES BEFORE CHRISTMAS. ABOUT TWELVE HUNDRED PEOPLE (OUT OF ABOUT 70,000 REFUGEES) ARE STILL IN TENTS, BUT THIS APPARENTLY IS A PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCE SINCE ALTERNATIVE TEMPORARY HOUSING IS AVAILABLE. CONSTRUCTION OF PREFABRICATED HOUSING IS NOW HITTING ITS STRIDE WHICH HAS BEEN IMMEDIATELY REFLECTED IN DECLINING NUMBER OF REFUGEES HOUSED IN SEA RESORT TOWNS AND THE END TO THE NATIONAL REQUISITION OF CAMPING TRAILERS. WITH THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS SEEMINGLY SURMOUNTED, FOCUS IS INCREASINGLY ON THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FRIULI. WHAT IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR, HOWEVER, IS THAT THERE IS NO GENERALLY AGREED PLAN AT THIS POINT ON THE FUTURE FRIULI. END SUMMARY.

2. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 13, ZAMBERLETTI TICKED OFF IMPRESSIVE STATISTICS OF HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE HIS NOMINATION AS SPECIAL COMMISSIONER IN MID SEPTEMBER. OF THE APPROXIMATELY 19,000 PREFABRICATED HOUSES (TOTAL TO BE BUILT BY NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS) NEEDED TO SHELTER AN ESTIMATED 70,000 REFUGEES ABOUT ONE FOURTH ARE ALREADY IN PLACE AND THE CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES AT FAST PACE DESPITE THE LACK OF MANUAL LABOR AND THE EXTRA BURDEN OF INCREASINGLY BAD WEATHER. ABOUT 15,000 PEOPLE ARE HOUSED IN CAMPING TRAILERS (5,200) AND ANOTHER 27,000 PEOPLE ARE IN THE SEA
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RESORTS. ABOUT 1,200 REFUGEES ARE STILL IN TENTS, BUT THAT

SEEMS TO BE A PECULIAR COMBINATION OF PERSONAL CHOICE AND LOCAL EXIGENCIES. HOWEVER, ALTERNATIVE TEMPORARY HOUSING IS AVAILABLE FOR THEM.

3. IMPROVING HOUSING SITUATION IS REFLECTED IN THE DECLINING NUMBER OF REFUGEES AT THE SEA SHORE (DOWN TO 27,000 FROM 35,000) AND THE CESSATION OF THE REQUISITION OF CAMPING TRAILERS. IF WORK CONTINUES AT THE PRESENT PACE, IT APPEARS THAT PREFABRICATED HOUSING WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ALL WHO NEED IT BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF ZAMBERLETTI'S MANDATE IN APRIL 1977.

4. WITH IMMEDIATE TEMPORARY HOUSING NEEDS COMING UNDER CONTROL, REGIONAL AUTHORITIES IN PARTICULAR ARE LOOKING TOWARD THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FRIULI. A STUDY OF THE DAMAGE TO THE REGION IS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY WHICH PURPORTEDLY WILL ATTEMPT TO PUT SOME PRICE TAG ON THE DAMAGE -- SOME SAY IT IS 3,500 BILLION LIRE. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THE SOCIAL/ECONOMIC FABRIC OF THE FRIULI REGION HAS BEEN DAMAGED AND NO ONE CAN JUDGE WITH ANY REAL ASSURANCE WHAT THE FINAL POLITICAL/ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE EARTHQUAKE WILL BE.

5. AT THE SAME TIME THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE AGREEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE. SOME MAYORS SEEM PARTICULARLY DETERMINED TO PUSH FOR THE REBUILDING ON THE SPOT OF THEIR DAMAGED OR DESTROYED VILLAGES. ROME DOES NOT SEEM TO AGREE BUT, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, IT HAS NO REAL ALTERNATIVE IDEAS. AS FOR THE TECHNICIANS, EXPERTS, ETC., THEY SEEM GENERALLY AGREED THAT THE MOST HEAVILY DAMAGED TOWNS WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO BE RELOCATED ELSEWHERE. THEY POINT OUT FOR EXAMPLE THAT GEMONA WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED IN MAY AND SEPTEMBER BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN REBUILT ON THE RUBBLE OF THE 1512 EARTHQUAKE. IN ANY EVENT, WITH PRESSURE DECLINING FOR IMMEDIATE HOUSING, THE OBVIOUS SIGNIFICANT HURDLE WILL BE TO REACH BROAD AGREEMENT ON THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FRIULI -- SOMETHING WHICH MAY PROVE TO BE INFINITELY MORE DIFFICULT THAN THESE EARLY FIRST STEPS. MOEN.

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